

ANDY HUG! El Canek! PEGUSUS KID! El Hijo Del Santo! VILLANO III! Villano IV! and other stuff I saw and heard this week!

Howdy!

Welcome to DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #26! It was a good week for tape-watchng, I got Mike's first Mountain of Tapes with all this old UWA stuff on it and I watched a bunch of stuff that I had watched before but needed to watch again. Plus one of my best friends- taking me totally by surprise- moved back from Australia, my combo played out at a smoky bar and the BOOZE jokes were back in MST3K, so overall (Except for the 50 hours of working) it was a great week!

-I watched all the Hamada's UWA commercial tapes (MIKE! WOO-HOO!) that focussed on one particular wrestler for an hour then focussed on another for an hour and so on. The UWA tapes were a lot of things- strange (the Hijo Del Santo action adventure movie that was shown between Caida's of his match against Negro Casas, which is up there with the Rock and Roll Express Music Video for Rock and Roll All Night in MidSouth, as the weirdest wrestling related thing you will see), cool (El Canek at the beach swimming with the hipsky blue trunks and the mask), Very Interesting (Villano III showing young punks how to wrestle in his gym), and disappointing in spots (only showing five minutes of TRULY ASS STOMPING Dos Caras vs El Canek match). Of course this is all mixed in with some of the best wrestling on earth ever. The El Hijo del Santo tape had great Santo vs Negro Casas match that was beautiful and it becomes REALLY interesting when you compare it to the Rey Misterio,Jr vs Juventud Guerrero matches from last year, because the young luchadores borrow quite a bit from the Late 80's version, especially the highly choreographed mat work where they mirror each other and then break out into the lightning fast armdrag and headscissor combinations. I thought that was cool when Juventud and Rey did it, and now it's even cooler when you see where they got it from- sort of adds even more weight to those classic matches from last year. Another comparison would be the rudo role that Juventud and Negro both play in their respective matches, expending as much effort as the tecnico in making the moves of the tecnico look more great than they ever should. I never noticed the Negro Casas effect on Juventud until now- though there may just be the common influence of Fuerza Guerrera on both of them. The El Canek commercial tape was cool just because I've only seen his later matches when he is too old to do anything anymore. It was great seeing him in action when he was younger and truly graceful. The five minutes of El Canek vs Dos Caras had me so stoked, as it was a younger Dos Caras that was flying more than he does now and they were going at it pretty good and then they cut to personal reflection footage and then its El Canek vs Kokina! It was neat seeing Yokozuna actually working a little but you can imagine my chagrin.:) The Villano III tape had the spellbinding Villano II vs Pegasus Kid (Benoit in a Iowa Barnstormers mask, I thought to myself) and Benoit was truly Luchaesque in this baby. Villano used all the inventive matwork that sets a good luchadore apart and Benoit was freakin Benoit (even then) and it was choice. The ending was strange because Benoit sets up Villano for a superplex and the announcers contend (via "Hilarious Foule Instant Replay") that Benoit fouled him by sitting him on the turnbuckle. Despite this, it was an awesome wrestling display- as Benoit is just starting to notice his potential as a world class wrestler and

has adapted to the Lucha style. Villano III I need to find a lot more of. There was also a Perro Aguayo tape and eventhough he is in with the legendary El Gran Hamada, he still sucks and sucked back then, regardless of who he is wrestling.

-I rewatched some K-1 (Ollie!) while making a Pancrase section of a tape for Mike and I'm with Ollie on this- I usually don't dig kickboxing, but this stuff is so much cooler. This is a lot closer to Pancrase than Kickboxing on ESPN in my estimation. Ollie pointed out how the build up of each match sets it apart, and I'd have to agree, plus it has it's own Bas Rutten with the also-cult-worthy, charismatic kicking-machine, Andy Hug.

-Nitro was good this week, which it had to be to counteract the last two weeks, which were a merciless onslaught of suck. The Guerrero/Malenko matches from Monday and Saturday were great I thought- though the screwy and goofy, respectively, endings were quite the hinderence. They need to take one of the belts off of one of these guys so the unclear finish isn't such a sure thing, but overall, this was as inspired as I've seen these two look when in with each other since the heady ECW days of yesteryear.:) The Regal/Misterio Jr match was great- with Regal showing that he can do anything with anybody and make a great match out of any awkward situation when he wants to. Rey was once again surprising with his courage in the face of incredible stiffness, and was nearly credible looking against such a larger opponent in the match- though the chasm of size differential would only allow so much in the eyes of the American Wrestling public, I would say. I liked the Chavo Jr/Jarrett vs Benoit/Mongo match though it was quite the unlikely pairing. Chavo worked his little hinder off and took his beating from Benoit like a man. Mongo shows slight improvement in the ring, since I no longer fear him screwing up really badly and crippling someone accidentally. I wish they would put the belt on Benoit and have a full-blown Jarret/Benoit feud already. Alex Wright is looking better (except for the blown springboard dropkick). The Steiners/High Voltage match I dug for some reason and as for the Randy Anderson thing, my question is- when did Jim Cornette starting booking WCW? The rest sucked.

-The Thursday Raw Thursday was pretty okay. I liked the Headbangers match quite a bit, though Aldo Montoya and Holly aren't... really... good. I was astonished at the clean pin by Hart on Vader, though I think it was another nail in the coffin of the Mythically Great Monster Heel Called Vader as opposed to some radical change in the WWF booking method. I'll believe the Micheals retirement when I don't see it. I was in the audience for the fake collapse, so I ain't buying nothing. The rest pretty much sucked.

NANIWA~!